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## MUSIC AND THE DRAMA

pense with the need for long practice in teaching rhythm to the fingers. As every psychologist knows, one doesn't learn practices with his brain alone, but with the entire nervous and muscular system concerned, and transferences of capacity from one set of nerves to another are impossible. In fact, a singer's musicianship is as much a matter of technical skill as is a pianist's, and therefore cannot be acquired forthwith by just thinking and desiring it. It is won only after years of persistent practice. Yet the average vocal student wants at least a church position by the close of the first year's study, or even before it.

It is so far from helping matters that it hinders them, when vocal students accompany themselves on the piano, because then they naturally accommodate their music to their singing. Just so soon as such students sing to another accompanist they meet trouble and begin to complain that the pianist plays incorrectly or without sympathy. Again, in the few cases where a singer shows good musicianship he usually has a poorly devel-

oped vocal art, simply because his attention has been too much withdrawn from it.

Plainly, there is only one solution for the problem—musicianship must be included as an integral part, and in due balance, throughout the singer's course of training. This musicianship should comprise the fundamental principles of music, rhythm, ear training, harmony, musical analysis, sight reading and sight singing, the last especially in ensemble. Each of these subjects must be taught separately and independently, but naturally in classwork. They can begin early in the educational course, for the voice is not used in several of them, and they should continue one way or other throughout the student's course in order by this means completely to combine with the purely vocal art. The musicianship course must be graded and not be elective, but required from every student. And students should also be urged to practice their songs in preparation for a lesson only with the assistance of a precise and critical accompanist, and by no means to accompany for themselves.

## ROBERT MANTELL

THE distinctive position occupied by Mr. Robert Mantell, the tragedian, is worthy of passing comment. His career is rather unique in the annals of the stage, for no tragedian of reputation may be recalled who has undertaken or achieved distinction in so many roles and accomplished so much work. His dogged determination and splendid ideals are a striking tribute and example not only for the young actor, but for any aspirant in other lines of artistic or commercial endeavor. The revival of Shakesperean and classic plays at this time is most opportune, especially as the affairs of the stage are at an ebb and solely occupied by ephemeral productions of the lightest character. True, the thoughtful one can hardly recall a play of any consequence produced within the past ten or twelve years, and not only native playwrights but international writers of repute have received more than ordinary encouragement. In fine, it has been an epoch for the writer of the third class, who has received financial returns greatly in excess of his literary returns. Nowadays millionaire authors and penny-a-liners are as common as the barons who have wrested their gold from commercial commodities.

With this class of material largely occupying the stage, naturally the art of acting has sunk to a low level, and few if any histrions

with any *metier* may be named. All honor then to Mr. Mantell, to whom the public must look for acting in its first and last analysis, for in the repertoire exploited by him may be only exemplified a perfect interpretation of the passions. The scope and character of Mr. Mantell's work and the length and variety of his repertoire has been discussed elsewhere. Suffice it to say that this season his magnificent rendition of the crafty monarch, Louis XI, which has been stamped with critical approval everywhere; his revival of "Romeo and Juliet," and "The Lady of Lyons," together with other parts played by him during his recent Chicago and western engagements, indicate that this distinguished tragedian does not let time drag upon his hands, but is ever youthful and aspiring and his work has been so fused and mellowed that greater things may be expected. His repertoire this season includes, besides the plays already mentioned, "The Merchant of Venice," "Hamlet," "Othello," "Macbeth," "King Lear," "Richelieu." Later on he will appear in New York in a revival of "King John," and his manager, Mr. William A. Brady, is already mapping out an itinerary which will include a world tour for Mr. Mantell, the tragedian appearing in a cycle of Shakesperean plays at Covent Garden Theater, London.